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# County Life

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## Time to unite

Kate Butler cites the past for a present day issue. See editorial on page 6.

## Let music soothe the soul

Haliburton County Folk Society's Sue Shikaze presents the benefits of music. See story on page 7.

## Planting the seed

Gardening efforts now will yield an upcoming successful season. See story on page 10.

Area photographer Tammy Nash captured the sunset at dusk on Dec. 16 in Algonquin Highlands.

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## Haliburton welcomes Huskies

The Haliburton County Huskies players and coaching staff gather near the end of a team practice on Saturday, Jan. 1 held at the A.J. LaRue Arena in Haliburton. The Ontario Junior Hockey League team's practice was originally part of a New Year's Day event, which included a public skate with fans. The practice proceeded, but the public skate was cancelled due to COVID-19 protocols implemented by the OJHL recently. /DARREN LUM Staff

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The Haliburton County Huskies coach Ryan Ramsay, in grey, speaks with players before running a drill during the practice.

A Haliburton County Huskies player watches his shot sail past the net during what ended up being the last team practice before the season was suspended because of the provincial decision to return to a modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen at the A.J. LaRue Arena in Haliburton.

County Life

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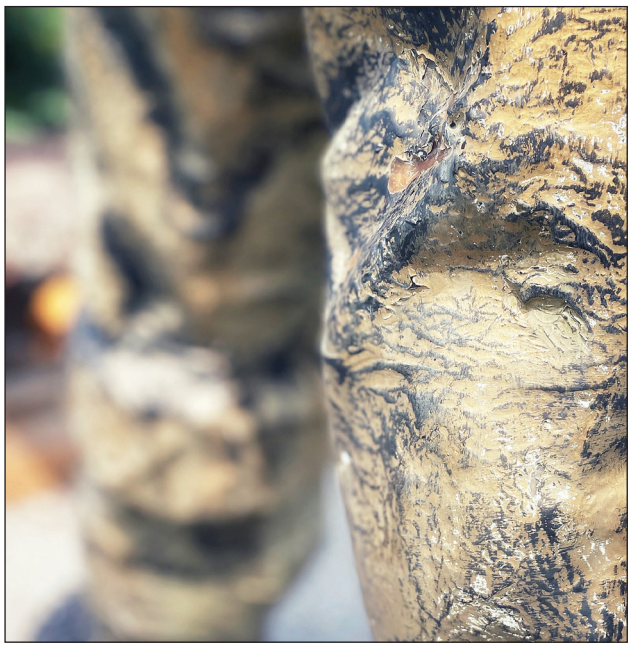
# Local Landmark Mystery

## Local Landmark reveal: Hawk Lake Log Chute

This wooden chute, which is found at the outflow of Big Hawk Lake, has been in place since 1861. It was in use until the 1930s and has been repaired several times since then. The most recent restoration was finished in 2005 after the chute was declared an historic site by the Municipality of Algonquin Highlands. The project took nine skilled craftspeople nine full days to complete. Wooden log chutes like this were an essential part of the logging industry. They enabled loggers to move their logs through rough sections of river that would otherwise cause log jams. Log chutes existed in several places in the Haliburton Highlands, including Buttermilk Falls where the wooden chute was replaced with a concrete structure that can still be seen today. Once numbering in the thousands in Ontario, this restored log chute is the last of it's kind in the province. The site is home to the restored log chute, several hiking trails and a lovely picnic area just downstream. Submitted by Thom Lambert. He posts regularly for @myhaliburtonhighlands on Instagram.







## Close-up clues

The following are images of a local landmark. Try to guess what the landmark is and see in the next week's County Life for the reveal. Concept and images from Thom Lambert, who has informative posts about things to see and do in the Highlands through Myhaliburtonhighlands on Instagram.
/Submitted by Thom Lambert

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# Weather is all in the signs

**CHRIS DROST**
*County Life* Staff

We all know that Canadians are obsessed with talking about the weather.

"It is because temperatures and seasons vary so wildly in Canada. You don't talk about weather in a country where tomorrow is just like today," said David Phillips, senior climatologist with Environment Canada.

Today, most of us are glued to our phones checking for news about an approaching storm. In the past however, when most people were more directly connected to the land, the signs for predicting weather were passed down from one generation to the next, just as family stories or folk tales were passed along.

During some parts of the year, the weather models used by the modern-day meteorologist seem to be relatively accurate, while during other periods, there seems to be more of a challenge in getting it right. Why not challenge yourself to pay more attention to the weather signs in nature in the coming weeks? It could be fun to see just how accurate those old timers were in predicting the weather.

## Can animals tell the weather?

Has your dog been rolling on his back in the snow? According to some old timers, this is a clear indication of a coming storm. Keep an eye on your four-legged friend.

Just the day before a recent storm, a farmer friend said he spotted a fox out looking for food, a clear sign to him that a storm would happen within a day or two. In winter, animals that are not hibernating will come out when the weather is fine to forage for food.

When driving down a country road you often see cows laying down together. Did you know this can mean an upcoming mild spell, or a thunderstorm, depending on the time of year?

Who would have thought that when you see spiders coming out of hiding in your house, it can mean a storm is coming?

In the fall when you find a wasp nest high off the ground it means there will be deep snow that winter. If the nest is low or in the ground, it means a light year for snow.

## Weather is for the birds

Have you seen an owl lately? Some believe that seeing an owl out in the daytime is a sign of a change in the weather.

If you see a pileated woodpecker, a big storm is coming, and if you see a smaller downy woodpecker, the storm will be light.

A gathering of snowbirds in the field means snow is coming.

If a blue jay is singing on the hill, the coming weather will be milder, while if you spot one singing in a swamp, the weather will soon be turning colder.

## Look for signs in the sky

We all know the saying, "Red sky at night, sailor's delight; red sky in the morning, sailor's warning," but there are a host of other signs in the sky that long time weather watchers use to predict the weather.

A buttermilk sky – mottled looking – is never 24 hours dry, meaning rain within the next day. I know from personal observations over a number of years that that one is almost always accurate.

Did you know that winter's fog will freeze a dog? Yes, the prediction is that fog in winter will be followed by a cold spell.

Check the moon. Is there a distinct ring around it? If so, take caution as it means there is a near hand – an old Scottish word meaning close by – storm approaching.

Thunder in winter is thought to predict a "backward spring", meaning that winter will hold on and spring will come late. I wonder how this compares in accuracy to the popular groundhog predictions?

When the sky clears up at night, it won't last. If it clears in the daytime it will stay clear.

## A sign in the winds

Dancing trees are a well-known sign of a coming storm, especially when the leaves blow inside out.

"Winds in the east, fish bite the least. Winds in the west, fishing is best. Winds in the south blow the bait into the fish's mouth." Perhaps try this approach on your next fishing trip. Some take this one seriously and make their decision whether or not to go fishing based on the direction of the wind.

When you see the wind blowing the snow off the trees it is a sign that the weather is getting colder.

## Weather and ice and snow

When you hear the ice on a lake banging it means the air pressure is dropping and a storm is coming.

## Long icicles, deep snow.

If the first snow that comes is fine and sticks to the mud, it will last. If they are large flakes, the first snow will soon disappear. This is another one that seems accurate most of the time.

## No lack of conversation

Whether your preference is the weather channel, your mobile phone, the farmer's almanac or signs in nature, the one thing is sure, the weather in Canada always gives us a lot to talk about. Have some fun with these signs ... and keep shovelling.

# Rail trail, a path to the past

**JANET TRULL**

*Special to County Life*

There are stories along the Haliburton County Rail Trail. Ghosts of early settlers wait on wooden platforms at the Kinmount, Gelert and Haliburton stations. They are newly arrived immigrants from European countries fleeing persecution. They are Irish immigrants fleeing famine. They are Icelandic immigrants fleeing volcanic eruptions. They are English immigrants seeking adventure and opportunity.

In 1878, when the Victoria Railway was officially opened, Haliburton County became a melting pot of different languages and cultures. Some settlers were educated and wealthy. But most were desperate and broke.

From the late 1860s to the early 1880s, settlers were lured to this area by the Homestead Act of Ontario, a scheme to push back the wilderness. The newly confederated Dominion of Canada clung precariously to the border of the United States, exposed and vulnerable. Populating the northern regions required a strategy, and what better way to entice people than free farmland?

Except there was precious little farmable land in the Highlands among the jumble of rock left by ancient retreating ice. Who would go there? Who would stay once they saw the insurmountable challenges? People with limited options.

A parade of newcomers arriving at the train station brought change. Good and bad. You can be sure that the original settlers, a proud, if rough lot, had mixed reactions to the arrival of locomotives filled with ragged foreigners. Like the Trojan horse of old, the iron horse was something to be wary of. But there is a common language in hard work and community service and the town grew.

Life got easier in many ways with the arrival of the train. Less isolated. Newspapers from the city helped people feel connected. For some, however, it brought further hardships. There was more competition for jobs at mills and logging camps. Local farmers complained they could not sell their carrots and potatoes and turnips. Cheap, fresh produce was arriving daily from Lindsay where the growing season was longer and the soil richer.

The train travelled both ways. For the price of a ticket, a young woman could escape her backwoods shack for cities with sidewalks and Sunday concerts. A young man could go looking for better prospects. But city life wasn't always what it was cracked up to be. When your heart is in the highlands, you are compelled to return.

Houses multiplied. Churches and schools created a sense of permanence. And the rails kept humming, bringing commerce and goods and passengers. Wheelers and dealers stepped off the train with business opportunities. Sportsmen came to fish and hunt. Artists arrived, enchanted by the colours and textures of pristine lakes and wind-sculptured white pines.

Walking, biking and riding the rail trail trail in winter, you can look into the bush on either side and think about the hardships. Keeping the cabin warm in January. Feeding the bairns. Keeping the wolves at bay. Stop and listen. Imagine the haunting echo of a train whistle breaking the silence of this frozen forest.

The Haliburton County Rail Trail holds stories of the past. Listen carefully and you might hear them come alive. /DARREN LUM Staff

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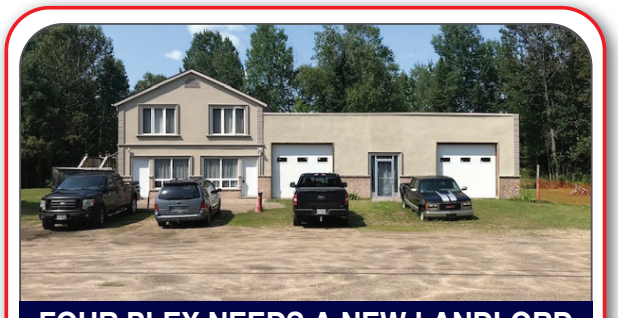

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## Supporting local businesses - a proud tradition

**KATE BUTLER**
*Haliburton Highlands Museum*

The recent restrictions announced by the provincial government to help curb the spread of COVID-19 have meant another pivot for many of our local businesses. Though we've been reminded throughout the pandemic to shop locally and support local businesses, it's worth a reminder of the way that local businesses have long been an integral part of our community's landscape.

In the late-19th Century and early-20th Century, local shops played a key role in providing those items which people might not have been able to provide for themselves. It's true that many local residents farmed and even more kept kitchen gardens for vegetables. Many families would also have had their own cow to provide milk, but what of the vessels to hold those items? An early photo showing Irwin's store, which still stands today on Pine Avenue in Haliburton, reveals a myriad of bowls, jugs and plates in the shop's front window display. Above them hangs a cluster of oil lamps which could have brightened a long winter night and I'm quite sure they could even provide those replacement pieces if the delicate chimney of your lamp broke, as they often did. Another window of the shop provides a glimpse of fabrics for those who might have preferred to make their own garments, but might not have been inclined to weave their own cloth.

As well as fabrics and housewares, local shops could also provide in the realm of wellness. A front window display from Daniel Gorrie's Highland Street store from around 1910 reveals cod liver oil, vegetable pills, toothache cures and even poultry panacea, in case it wasn't you, but your chickens, who were under the weather. It's rare to have a look further inside these sorts of shops in this era, but luckily Daniel Gorrie was an avid photographer with a state-of-the-art camera. His displays inside the shop look like works of art with delicately balanced pyramids of boxes and a counter topped with beautifully filled glass jars. The items sold at the shop features those staples that people might not have been growing themselves, like oats, and, those slightly more processed foods, like corn flakes. The shop also reveals those little luxuries, like boxes of Red Rose tea (in packaging that we'd have no trouble still recognizing today), a case full of pipes and the tobacco to go in them, and a variety of types of boiled sweets. You can just imagine how these sorts of items might have brightened someone's day, provided a little respite or warmed a winter's evening. We've all been reminded over the last 22 months that there can be much joy in small pleasures and sometimes those pleasures come courtesy of our local businesses. Also, by supporting local businesses, we know that we're helping others in our community and that makes the pleasure even greater.

One might say that historically people had no choice but to shop locally. But catalogues have long existed and with the arrival of the railway, the option to shop further afield became a possibility, but people continued to shop locally because of an implicit understanding of the way in which local businesses enhance our communities and help us all to look after our neighbours. This winter, let's recommit to finding ways to support our local shops, restaurants, businesses and organizations in whatever way we can – we're stronger together!

## Top 10 ways to deal with pandemic that never made the cut

**STEVE GALEA**
Humour Columnist

THINGS AREN'T exactly looking great in this latest wave of the pandemic. But I think it is important to remember that things could always be worse. For instance, our public health officials could have gone with some of the more extreme plans that were suggested before the vaccination and mask-wearing program was put in place. Some of those were:

1. Encourage a return to semaphore communication.
2. Real plastic bubbles for everyone.
3. Everyone go through the car wash, after every interaction.
4. More widespread use of the phrase, "I'm rubber you're glue" after being exposed to sneeze or cough.
5. Porcupine suits with six-foot-long quills.
6. Spend a year or two immersed in romance novels, warm quilts and hot chocolate.
7. Main public health advice: Dig hole, stick head in ground.
8. Drink whatever is in the shed and hope it works.
9. Recommended hand washing duration: three years.
10. Have everyone wear snorkels when out in public.

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**Flowing beauty**
Len Pizzey of Haliburton captured this image of a waterfall on Christmas Day.
Submitted by Len Pizzey

## The mailbox

Slide my boots down icy drive
To check the old mailbox
Red flag up, alert, alive
Among last season's stalks
Goldenrod and phragmite bent
Snow-laden from the day
Neither feels a discontent
Through winter's crispy sway

Somehow in descending light
Earth heartbeat stays lukewarm
Whispers still with brave insight
Informs me, sun or storm
Clutch of cards and notes therein
Await my eager hand
New year wants time to begin
Its fresh start for the land

Greetings from relations too
The post can offer love
Paper, ink: one avenue
Across same sky above
Trees continue nightly chats
Their tall arms scratch the dark
Snowflakes like young acrobats
Cold angels court and spark

I nod bye, turn heel and start
Return to distant door
Understand this route by heart
I've tiptoed here before
Cat waits still as statue
In the window looking out
She sees more than I do
Knows the face of night, no doubt

*By Deborah J Reed*

# *The healing power of music*

**SUE SHIKAZE**

Special to *County Life*

Audience members applaud, following a performance during the Open Stage event at the Royal Canadian Legion on Saturday, Dec. 11 in Haliburton. See the Haliburton County Folk Society's website (www.haliburtonfolk.com) for more information about future events./FILE DARREN LUM Staff

If you've ever had the occasion to crank up the volume and escape into the music of a favourite album, you'll know how music has the power to soothe, calm and transform. Music invariably accompanies our life highs and lows, from times of celebration to loss and everything in between.

It turns out that the good feelings we often associate with music aren't just a passing fancy. There's a significant body of research demonstrating the benefits of music on our health. As someone who works in public health, as a music promoter, and a musician myself, I find the connection fascinating. It's a win-win when something we do for enjoyment and entertainment also contributes to our health and well-being. Yes, music can be medicine!

As we near the two-year mark of the pandemic, we are all feeling the stress of months of public health measures, isolation from family and friends, disrupted work and coping with loss. All this, along with the continued uncertainty about what's to come in the months ahead may be making you feel more anxious or depressed. The good news is a solution might be waiting in your vinyl collection, CD rack, phone or in the instrument case gathering dust in your closet.

Research by Daniel J. Levitin, PhD at McGill University, has shown that listening to and playing music boosts the immune system by increasing production of the antibody immunoglobulin A and other cells that attack invading viruses. And that relaxation you feel when listening to the right piece of music? It's because music also reduces levels of cortisol, the hormone associated with stress. Music has also been shown to be more effective than prescription medicine at reducing anxiety before surgery.

Listening to, or making music, can also help relieve stress and anxiety by bringing the listener into the present – often referred to as 'mindfulness'. Dany Bouchard, a music therapist at Montreal General Hospital, says that when listening to or making music, you are temporarily relieved of the anxiety that comes from worry about the future or ruminating about the past. He says that music helps to reconnect to the present moment and recommends using music as a mindfulness practice.

We can't change the past and there are a lot of things about the future that we don't have control over. But we can choose to listen to music that encourages relaxation or stimulation, depending on what we need most at a given moment. So the next time you find yourself feeling a bit worried, or anxious, or sad, why not pick a piece of music and crank up the volume … you might even want to sing along!

No matter what your musical choices are – classical, rock, country, folk, blues, hip hop … what you're listening to is not just enjoyable, it may also be the mental health medicine you need in these uncertain times.

Interested in finding out more about how music benefits health? Check out:

The Awesome Music Project theawesomemusicproject.com, Centre for Addictions and Mental Health – harnessing the healing power of music www.camh.ca, *This is Your Brain on Music*, by Daniel J. Levitin

The Simply Befiddled's band members Wendy Evenden-Loney, from left, Beth Johns, Wendy Wood and Karen Armstrong (with Ken Loney and Norris Turner out of frame) perform during the Open Stage event at the Royal Canadian Legion on Saturday, Dec. 11 in Haliburton. See the Haliburton County Folk Society's website (www.haliburtonfolk.com) for more information about future events./FILE DARREN LUM Staff

*Sue Shikaze is a Health Promoter at the HKPR District Health Unit, co-artistic director of the Haliburton County Folk Society's concert series and volunteer host at CANOE FM, where she spins some of her musical favourites on Northern Aire a couple of Saturdays a month, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.*

# New members, new ideas welcomed by the library

In politics and the corporate realm, there's some scrutiny as to what a leader or CEO achieves in their first 100 days on the job. As an introspective Library CEO myself, just over three months into my new role at the Haliburton County Public Library, I'm presently taking stock of what has been accomplished as we start 2022.

What a year it has been at the library! We said goodbye to interim CEO Anna Babluck, who brought HCPL to new heights. Three longstanding staff members, who together served our communities for a combined total of more than 89 years, made the decision to retire.

When joining HCPL, I was tasked with weaving together the excellent work that's been done so far on developing a new Strategic Plan for the Library. Since then, I've come to know the HCPL board, the staff, and many of our key partners. I now have a more fulsome perspective and can begin charting the course for a fresh chapter at the library, guided by our new Strategic Plan. Great things are in store for the near future, and many exciting initiatives are already in motion!

We've just launched a new digital resource called Kanopy. This is a streaming service similar to Netflix but designed for public libraries. It features documentaries, foreign films, learning courses, and content for children. This year, Kanopy was made possible thanks to a generous donation from the Rotary Club of Haliburton. Based on experiences at other library systems, we expect that offering Kanopy will directly translate to new members joining the library in 2022. Libraries are, of course, places to seek answers and engage in lifelong learning, but they are also a place to access entertainment in diverse formats.

When I began my role, restoring basic library service to our residents and visitors in Dorset quickly became a priority. I'm pleased to report that the Library board and I have worked to create a unique public-private partnership with Robinson's General Store. The 'Dorset Depot Lockers' were installed late last month, and we'll soon be informing our Dorset patrons about how they can access their holds 24/7 via these lockers.

This fall, we also hired a new programming and outreach coordinator. Andrea Brown is busy building and maintaining community relationships and making new things happen at the library. In 2022 we hope to re-launch socially-distanced programming, and begin bringing back the lively community hub aspect of the public library that so many of us have been missing during the pandemic.

Please watch out for news about what's happening from a health and safety perspective, and also about the great things we'll have on offer in 2022. There is always something for everyone at HCPL. If you don't see what you might be looking for, please connect with us to suggest a program idea or a new book title for our consideration

The library in every community is shaped by the needs and desires of the people who use it, and we value the feedback we receive at our branches and on our social media. Thank you to the people who support the library, including our volunteers and those helping us raise funds, such as members of the Friends of Haliburton Public Library. One of the best ways you can support your local public library is to simply become a member. I hope to see you and your family at any of the Haliburton County Public Library branches! Stay tuned for more great initiatives to come.

*Submitted by Chris Stephenson, HCPL CEO*

# Plooard takes December

Congratulations to Pauline Plooard of Minden for winning the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation 50/50 Draw's December Grand Prize of $7,080 – our biggest jackpot yet!

Pauline's winning ticket F-4515069 was drawn Dec. 31, New Year's Eve.

For January there will again be two Early Bird prizes of $250 added to the draw schedule on Jan. 17, with the Grand Prize draw taking place Feb. 1.

Thanks to all who participated in the December 50/50 lottery. Tickets are now available for purchase for the January draws.

To be eligible for the Early Bird Draws, tickets must be purchased by 11:59 p.m. on Jan.16. Entries close for the Grand Prize draw at 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 31, and the Grand Prize draw will take place on Feb. 1, at 9 a.m. Note that it is possible to win both the Early Bird and Grand Prize draws.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.hhhsf5050.ca and in person at the HHHS Foundation's Haliburton office 7199 Gelert Rd. Visit the website for the Rules of Play, to see the current estimated take-home prize, and to purchase tickets.

*Submitted by HHHSF*

Minden's Pauline Plooard won $7,080 playing the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation 50/50 draw. Her name was drawn on New Year's Eve. Submitted by Lisa Tompkins

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# The wide world of wacky sports

*Veteran reporter highlights strange sports he's covered*

**STEPHEN PETRICK**
Special to *County Life*

As a newish resident and reporter in these woods, I recently got a crash course (but not literally) on ice racing. The winter version of auto racing clearly has a niche following but, outside of that world, is likely not known to many, unless you're from Minden, one of only two places in Ontario that has an ice track.

As strange as ice racing sounds to me – it would put me in a snowbank in seconds – it ain't the craziest sport I've ever scribed on. After more than 20 years as a sports reporter, I've learned that almost every town has people who participate in obscure competitions.

In Kingston, where my career started, you might say it's sheep dogging, or in nearby Marmora it's dogsledding. When I covered sports in Belleville, I learned about horse barrel racing. To do any of these, you gotta be an animal, if you know what I mean. Then there are sports that exist for the specialized athlete; they are sports that haven't grown in any one place, but were born through online communities; products of people with rare skills finding each other. Some sports, like the Ironman [Triathlon] – 2.4 mile swim, a 112-mile bike and 26.2 mile run, are, in my opinion, more exercises in self-torture and obsession. While other sports are clearly the brainchilds of people with brilliant senses of humour.

American sportswriter Rick Reilly once authored a book called *Sports From Hell*, in which he chronicled his attempt to find the world's stupidest sports, leading to chapters on chess boxing, ferret legging and baseball.

Consider this my own attempt to tell you about sports you may never have heard of, but should. We're still in a pandemic after all, and you may want to take up one of these, if you're going stir-crazy.

## If you're good looking, try "fitness modelling."

Many years ago, when I worked in Kingston, a man more handsome than myself wrote to my newsroom to say he was entering a competition in the sport of fitness modelling.

It was like bodybuilding, he explained, except the objective isn't to bulk up like the Hulk and tan to look like a greased turkey. The most admirable thing about that sport, I thought, was competitors would be docked points if their bulging biceps seemed unnatural. Unlike baseball at the time, it had an anti-steroids stance.

We reported on the man's training and eventual placing at the Toronto-based fitness modelling competition. Much like his abs, his performance was solid.

## If you're daring, try multi-vehicle drag racing

In many places, people spend Thanksgiving weekend eating turkey. At Shannonville Motorsport Park, near Belleville, people used to spend it drag racing. But this wasn't your typical drag racing with pencil-shaped cars. Participants could enter any type of vehicle and race head-to-head with an entirely different vehicle, maybe even one without wheels.

The event, known as the Jim Parkhurst Memorial, and other drag race events throughout the year, could answer timeless questions, such as, what can go faster, a Cadillac or a Ski-Doo?

## If you're smart, 3-by3 cubing

Another memorable experience from my time in Kingston was hearing the accolades of a young Rubik's Cube prodigy. The kid could take a cube with 27 randomly sequences squares and align the colours perfectly within about 30 seconds. Impressive, I thought, considering it takes me 30 minutes to find my car keys. I remember him saying that cracking the code has something to do with understanding the squares' relationship to the white square that ends in the middle.

Rubik's Cube competitions, known as cubing championships, are a real thing and, fittingly, one is sponsored by Red Bull, the energy drink known for restoring mental alertness. Google tells me the time record for solving a 3-by-3 cube is 4.7 seconds.

## If you're funny, enter a rock paper scissors competition

Years ago, while pursuing a photojournalism degree, I had to search out interesting events to shoot. So when I learned that downtown Toronto was hosting the 2004 World Rock Paper Scissors Championships, I polished my lens and, upon arriving, widened my astonished eyes.

The event took place in one of those warehouse-turned nightclubs under the shadow of the CN Tower. Contestants, some in Halloween-like costume, squared off with opponents to win best-of-threes and advance in a bracket-tournament format. Flamboyant refs in striped shirts guided the action amid music and TV lights.

Was it real or a parody of something? It was so much fun, it didn't matter. The internet will show you that there are several similar Rock Paper Scissors competitions that are really made-for-TV events.

## If you're … no wait, you can't do … Joggling

This one takes the cake. Again, when working in Kingston, I learned of a Queen's University student whose goal was to break a "joggling world record" while racing in one of the city's marquee road races. Joggling is a sport that combines juggling with jogging. Apparently the arm motions that require joggling are not unlike the motion of arms when running, so it can be done.

Jogglers who enter races are not disqualified if they drop a ball, but they must pick it up immediately and resume juggling as they move forward in their trek. Jugglers have competed against each other on short tracks, but jogglers can compete for joggling distance and time records while participating with regular runners in community races.

Search joggling – or any of these sports, for that matter – on YouTube and you'll laugh. Or cry. Or maybe want to give them a try.

*Stephen Petrick is a freelance journalist who recently started contributing to White Pine Media publications such as the Minden Times, the Haliburton County Echo and County Life. His years of sports reporting have left him with a horrible sense of humour.*

# Seeds! Seeds! Seeds!

**ALISON SQUIRE**
*Haliburton County Master Gardeners*

Left, easy to grow nasturtiums have edible leaves and are great companion plants in vegetable gardens. Photos submitted by Alison Squire

Below, an image of a zinnia close up.

We are in the middle of winter, the holidays are over, and the deep cold of February is on the horizon. Sounds depressing, but for garden enthusiasts it can be one of the most exciting times of the year. Opportunities abound: garden designs to re-vamp, new varieties to explore, growing calendars to create, and endless opportunities to imagine what you will be growing in your garden this summer! It is time to order seeds, hurray!

Now, if you are anything like me, in your excitement you will order WAY too many seeds wanting to try everything, and come spring ... PANIC! Where am I going to put them all?! Learn from my mistakes and take a few moments to rough out a simple garden plan. First, sunlight. How many hours of sunlight do you have and in what locations of your garden? Full sun is at least six hours a day, but most full sun plants prefer eight to 10 hours of sunlight for maximum growth. Be sure to check the back of the seed packets or catalogue entry for the optimum growing requirements and plan accordingly. Part sun and/or part shade is classified as four to eight hours of sunlight and full shade is less than four hours. If you have a simple sketch of your garden with approximate lighting conditions, it will help you narrow your seed selection. Your second consideration are your soil conditions. This includes soil depth, moisture, and composition. Certain plants have large rooting systems that require depth for maximum production, such as tomatoes. Others have shallow rooting systems that will require regular hydration. Watering capabilities is the third consideration. Do you have a water collection source in place or an irrigation system? All the above are items to consider while being realistic about how much time and effort you have available to maintain your garden.

In addition to selecting seeds for your landscape and lifestyle, try to select ones that are suited to our unique growing season. Haliburton and the surrounding area is Canada Zone four, which can be tricky when trying to grow from seed. Our growing season (days free from frost) is usually between 80 to 100 days from June to September. Frost free days are not the only factors. While there might not be a frost warning in effect, the soil temperature can still be too cold for seeds to germinate. Once you take cold soil into consideration you are realistically left with 60-70 growing days. It may seem short but there are a lot of varieties with a short growing season and they will provide you with an abundance of flowers and delicious vegetables. Many vegetable varieties thrive in our cool fall season and taste even better with a touch of frost in September or October! Keep in mind that not all flowers and vegetables are grown from seed. Garlic and lilies are from bulbs, onions from sets, potatoes and dahlias are from tubers. Many of these have special planting, growing and winterization requirements. While they are beautiful and can thrive in your garden, it is important to research the care and maintenance required before purchasing to ensure they fit your landscape and lifestyle. In this article, I am focusing specifically on plants starting from seed.

Warm season crops such as tomatoes and peppers have a longer growing season and require deep and warm soil temperatures. If you want to grow these varieties, they must be started indoors and transplanted outside when air and soil temperatures rise, or alternatively purchase transplants from your local nursery in June and plant directly in your garden.

Nothing beats fresh herbs! They are quick and easy to grow in pots or as a garden border. Mix and match your favorites for a wonderful display of greens that can be added to every meal. Thyme, dill, basil, parsley, chives, cilantro, sage, oregano, marjoram, lemon balm, mint and rosemary. Bonus, some are even hardy perennials and will grow again next year where you planted them.

Flowers that grow well from seed include sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos, columbine, yarrow, nasturtiums and snapdragons. Marigolds are a favourite as their scent deters insects and unwanted garden pests. Plant around your outdoor sitting area to discourage mosquitoes or within your vegetable garden to dissuade squash bugs and tomato worms. Hollyhock and lupins grow well from seed but they are bi-annual plants, therefore they will produce flowers in their second year of growth. Plant those seeds two years in a row to have continuous flowers in the following years.

Short growing season, direct seeded vegetables include beans (bush beans are a sure-fire choice for a novice), radishes, lettuce, arugula, carrots, parsnips, turnip, and spinach. Choose varieties that are slow to bolt. Read the seed packet or the catalogue description for valuable information. For a continual harvest throughout the season, stagger seed sowing. Cucumbers and short season members of the squash family can be direct seeded, grow well, and will produce into the cooler months before first frost. They can be too abundant (zucchini) or grow very large (pumpkins) so plant no more than two of each!

Vegetable varieties that extend into the fall are kale, mustard greens, cabbage, beets, broccoli, and cauliflower. These varieties can handle our cool autumn temperatures. Kale becomes slightly sweeter in taste after the first frost. Parsnips can be mulched and left in the ground until spring. In my flower garden, leafy greens are grown not only for their nutritious leaves but for their beautiful foliage. My personal favourite is Red Russian Kale. The purple-green colour and ruffled leaf texture of this three-foot plant is a beautiful back drop to my dwarfed black-eyed susans.

Where to get seeds? If you wait and buy your seed packets from a nearby store you might not get local seed or the specific variety you want. I recommend you order as local (Ontario) as possible. The Haliburton libraries have a free seed bank. Gelert Garden Farm (www.gelertgardenfarm.ca), William Dam Seeds (www.damseeds.com), Stokes Seeds (www.stokeseeds.com/ca/) or the Ontario Seed Company (www.oscseeds.com) are good places to start. When purchasing consider; heirloom, organic, non-GMO, and of course, be mindful of what you are planting to avoid introducing invasive species into our eco-system.

So, when the wintry weather has you trapped inside and feeling blue, think of warmer days ahead. It is always fun to try something new, so explore different varieties when selecting seeds for this year's growing season!

*Haliburton County Master Gardeners is a volunteer organization that provides horticultural advice specific to Haliburton and surrounding regions. Have your gardening questions answered or schedule an onsite consultation at www.haliburtonmastergardener.ca*

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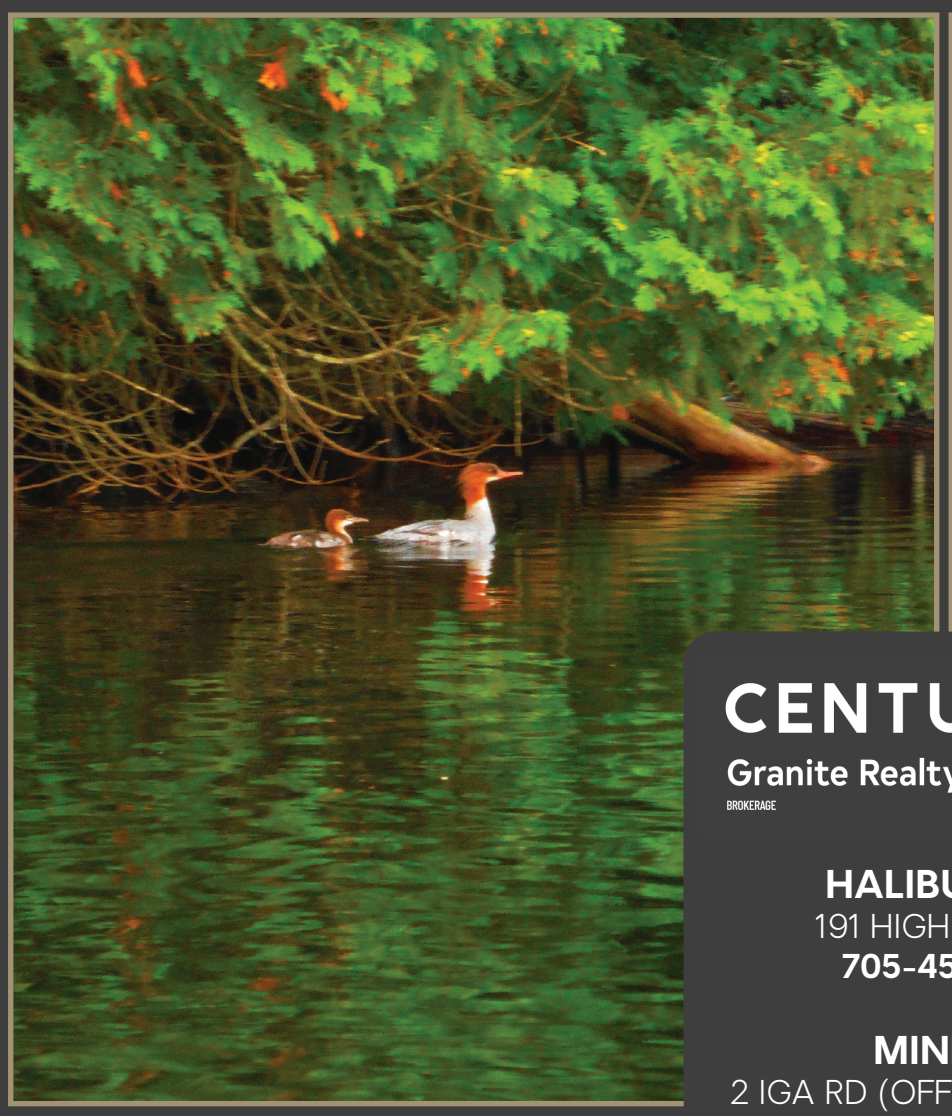

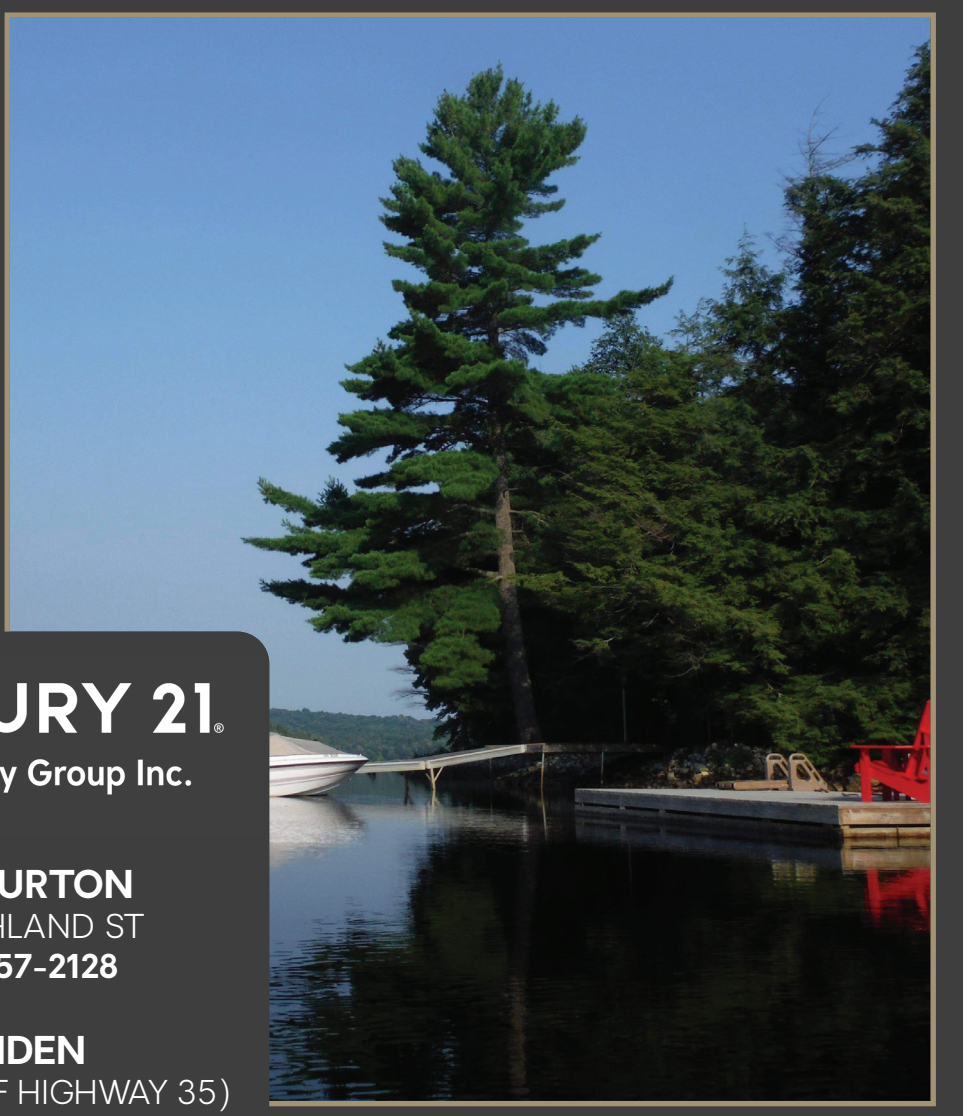

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## This week

### Glares & hugs

*There's been plenty of both in Minden Hills' first, somewhat tumultuous, year. Reeve Ross Rigney says that's a good thing.*

*see page 3*

### Ice action

*They're clearing a track for the Minden Ice Races, Jan. 19 & 20.*

*see page 9*

### Notable quotes :

*"It was just a giant heap of white ... I couldn't even walk through it."*
*David Lee, page 1*

*"Whether it's the answer they want or not, they deserve one."*
*Ross Rigney, page 3*

### Commentary

*The Times they are a changin'. Part two.*
*editorial, page 6*

Darren Lum/TIMES

**Snug as bugs in rugs**
The grown-ups may be complaining about all the snow dumped on the Minden area recently but the kids are just plain loving it! Twelve-year-old Curtis Penick and his 13-year-old buddy, Shane Fenwick, wasted no time building an enormous snow house on Bobcaygeon Rd., just across the street from Archie Stouffer Elementary School. The boys started construction New Year's Day and finished up a few days later. For more about the snowstorm that rocked the Moore's Falls area, see story.

# Vehicle vanishes in snow

## Moore's Falls area digs out from major storm

by ALLISON TAYLOR
*Times staff*

When David Lee went to bed on the night of Dec. 30, his navy Subaru Outback was safely parked in the driveway in front of his house – right where he left it.

The next morning, the Moore Lake resident couldn't find it.

"I looked out the window and it was just gone," he said with a chuckle.

He laughs because the car wasn't stolen or even missing from where Lee had parked it the night before: it just wasn't visible.

It was hiding.

In fact, the Subaru and everything else outside was swallowed under approximately four ft (1.2 metres) of snow, Lee said. The official accumulation of snowfall has yet to be determined.

"It was just a giant heap of white."

Over the course of one evening the snow had collected in the southern part of Minden Hills, around Moores Falls, Kinmount and Norland, to the point where, not only his automobile and barbecue were completely camouflaged, but the dog pen in the backyard of his house was almost undetectable.

"You couldn't even tell there was a fence there," he said.

Lee said the snow started falling that night and he could hardly see anything other than the white of the snow outside his window.

When he woke up in the morning, "the snow was everywhere."

After a large effort to push his front door open, Lee said he was able to extend his arm to the shovel he had luckily left beside the door. Once his hand firmly grasped the handle of the shovel, Lee said he put his head down and just starting moving the snow off the porch.

"I couldn't even walk through it,

*see WINTER page 2*

# *Biggest private donation ever for food bank*

by ALLISON TAYLOR
*Times staff*

A surprise contribution of $1,000 from a private donor helped the Minden Food Bank and the Christmas Baskets program fill some hungry tummies in the community over the December crunch.

While Food Bank Treasurer Jim Hicks wouldn't name the individual who gave the cash infusion to the food bank, he said it is the largest donation ever given by an individual.

There were several other contributions as well, Hicks said, underlying the fact that every donation helps the food bank support those less fortunate.

"We did very well this year," Hicks said."We really appreciate the generosity of everyone in the community."

The food bank works closely with various churches, service organizations, local businesses and hundreds of individual in the community, in order to make sure people in the area don't go hungry.

"It's an emergency food bank meant to help people get over tough times," Hicks said.

The Township of Minden Hills also donates $3,000 to the cause, half to the food bank and the other $1,500 goes toward the Christmas Baskets program, an initiative providing baskets of food, toys and other items families might require over the holidays but might not necessarily be able to afford.

The Christmas baskets program was "awesome" this year, said organizer Ron Reid, who works closely with the food bank to ensure the baskets are filled.

"We gave out 133 baskets, the same as last year," he said. "It filled the need."

*see NEED page 2*

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| Tailfeather Road lot | $30,000 | Trooper Lake cottage | $300,000 | Minden Lake cottage | $740,000 |
| West Court Place lot | $31,500 | Victoria Street home | $305,000 | Halbiem Cres home | $747,500 |
| Bushwolf Lake Road lot | $40,000 | Glamor Lake Road home | $325,000 | Kennisis Lake cottage | $750,000 |
| West Court Place lot | $41,500 | Buckslide Road home | $327,000 | Halls Lake cottage | $750,000 |
| 30th Line lot | $47,000 | Contau Lake Road home | $329,000 | Kennisis Lake cottage | $750,000 |
| Carnegie Lane fractional ownership | $52,000 | Little Gull Lake lot | $330,000 | Drag Lake cottage | $755,000 |
| County Road 503 lot | $55,000 | Percy Lake lot | $350,000 | Redstone River home | $755,000 |
| Camp Gayventure Crt fractional ownership | $59,000 | Angel Road home | $350,000 | Haliburton Lake cottage | $767,500 |
| Chalet Road lot | $60,000 | Sprucedale Street home | $370,000 | Minden Lake home | $771,000 |
| Osprey Road lot | $62,000 | Bobcaygeon Road home | $395,000 | Haliburton Lake cottage | $799,000 |
| County Road 503 lot | $65,000 | Minden Lake lot | $431,000 | Haliburton Lake cottage | $800,000 |
| Chelsea Lane lot | $75,000 | Negaunee Lake cottage | $441,501 | Davis Lake cottage | $825,000 |
| Highway 35 lot | $75,000 | Glamorgan Road cottage | $450,000 | Ingoldsby Road home | $827,000 |
| Industrial Park Road lot | $77,000 | Gelert Road home | $460,000 | Salerno Lake cottage | $845,000 |
| Osprey Road lot | $79,000 | Highland Street commercial | $465,000 | Boshkung Lake cottage | $849,000 |
| Highway 35 lot | $79,999 | Archie Street home | $475,000 | Kushog Lake cottage | $851,000 |
| South Drive lot | $86,007 | Irondale Road home | $490,000 | Kennisis Lake cottage | $852,000 |
| Wenona Lake Road lot | $90,000 | Red Pine WAO cottage | $501,000 | Trooper Lake cottage | $852,000 |
| South Drive lot | $90,000 | Mountain Street home | $520,000 | Kashagawigamog Lake Road home | $852,246 |
| Minden lot | $100,000 | Cope Lake Road home | $520,000 | Church Lake cottage | $871,000 |
| Mumford Road lot | $123,000 | Kashagawigamog Lake cottage | $520,000 | Tulip Road home | $889,000 |
| Stills Road lot | $125,000 | Little Gull Lake cottage | $525,000 | Haliburton Lake cottage | $901,000 |
| Haliburton Lake lot | $125,000 | Harburn Road home | $555,000 | Bob Lake cottage | $907,000 |
| North Drive lot | $125,000 | Highway 118 home | $598,000 | Farquhar Lake cottage | $928,000 |
| Highway 118 lot | $130,200 | Gelert Road home | $602,000 | Contau Lake cottage | $935,000 |
| East Road commercial | $135,000 | Drag River cottage | $605,000 | Church Lane cottage | $941,100 |
| Voicey Road lot | $137,000 | Contau Lake Road home | $609,000 | Soyers Lake cottage | $950,000 |
| Basshaunt Lake Road lot | $137,500 | Turning Leaf Lane home | $610,000 | Percy Lake cottage | $985,000 |
| Basshaunt Lake Road lot | $140,000 | Wenona Lake cottage | $625,000 | Clear Lake cottage | $1,003,000 |
| Angel Road lot | $145,000 | Drag River cottage | $656,000 | Kushog Lake cottage | $1,075,000 |
| Linkert Road lot | $146,500 | Glamor Lake cottage | $675,000 | Percy Lake cottage | $1,100,001 |
| Kushog Lake Road lot | $150,000 | Fortesque Lake Road home | $675,000 | Long Lake cottage | $1,200,000 |
| Haliburton Lake Road lot | $165,200 | Kennisis Lake cottage | $680,000 | Oxtongue Lake cottage | $1,260,500 |
| Brady Lake Road lot | $174,000 | Farmcrest Ave home | $701,000 | Little Kennisis Lake Road cottage | $1,330,000 |
| Buckslide Road lot | $174,250 | Negaunee Lake cottage | $720,000 | Kashagawigamog Lake cottage | $1,350,000 |
| Haliburton Lake Road lot | $181,000 | Old Donald Road home | $722,000 | Beech River cottage | $1,655,000 |
| Kashagawigamog Lake Road lot | $200,500 | Negaunee Lake cottage | $726,000 | County Road 21 commercial | $1,800,000 |
| Providence Drive cottage | $220,000 | Kashagawigamog Lake cottage | $730,000 | Soyers Lake cottage | $2,175,000 |
| Eagle Lake lot | $245,000 | Little Glamor Lake cottage | $730,100 | | |
| Gelert Road home | $300,000 | Irondale River home | $732,000 | | |

Thank you to all of our clients & customers, old and new...
for another successful year!